(b) the assistance being provided by Government for the study and the conditions in this regard;

(c) the action taken by Government against the doctors who have not returned back to the country so far; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Corneal blindness

4536. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the incidence of corneal blindness has been increasing rapidly;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the various programmes and plans followed by Government to assess the status of corneal blindness from time to time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Periodic surveys are conducted to assess causes of blindness. National survey (1986-89) indicated that corneal blindness accounted for 1.52% of blindness. Recent survey conducted in 2001-2002 indicated that only 0.9% blindness was due to corneal causes.

Research work in AIIMS

4537. MISS MABEL REBELLO : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that AIIMS doctors are unable to do research due to pressure of work;

(b) if so, the research that has been done in AIIMS during the last three years;

(c) the findings of these researches; and

(d) what way these researches have been useful to the people of the country?